India

FOR THE

No. 72. New Series. No. 166. Old Series.

WEEK ENDING FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1899.

Registered as a Newspaper. Price...... 2d By Post, 2½d.

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NOTES AND NEWS.

LORD ELGIN was the guest of the Northbrook Society on Tuesday—his fiftieth birthday—and heard many adjectives in the superlative degree. That, of course, was to be expected; nor is one disposed to examine too severely the congratulations which are natural to a festive occasion. But as the newspapers, or most of them, seem to have accepted these pleasant phrases as bald statements of literal truth it becomes necessary once again to restate the unpalatable fact. And the fact is that Lord Elgin left behind him in India the reputation of one of the weakest, and therefore one of the most mischievous, of Viceroys. Nobody, so far as we know, ever attributed to him an active desire for aggression beyond or repression within the Indian frontiers. But, whatever his intentions may have been, he had not the grit to withstand the sinister pressure which is always put upon a Viceroy by bureaucrats at the India Office and by the strong group of ambitious militarists in India. He failed; and his failure produced such bitter results in India that thoughtful men actually turned with a sigh of relief to Lord Curzon, whose military projects they detested, but whose reputation for strength and independence of mind offered at least the prospect of responsibility allied with power. Of course Lord Elgin is praised by the men whose suggestions he adopted—and whose "unswerving support" he rather pathetically acknowledges. But to speak of his Viceroyalty as illustrating "the 'reserve strength' of the British race" is to talk nonsense and excite ridicule.

Some of the speakers on Tuesday seem to have argued that because Lord Elgin had to deal with one of the greatest of famines he is one of the greatest of Viceroys. The argument is not quite easy to follow. Lord Rosebery had to apologise for his "limited knowledge of detail." That being so, it is interesting to note that upon the only matter which he discussed in detail—namely, the war beyond the frontier—he differed from Lord Elgin. Incidentally Lord Rosebery gave an excellent description, for which we must refer our readers to the report, of the folly of the "forward" policy. He was right also in saying that the chief test of a Viceroy's work is to be found in its effect upon the happiness of those whom he governs. But to say that Lord Elgin satisfies this test is another thing. Lord Elgin, we are told, "endeavoured, by holding wisely and well the balance of power and of justice, to make the nations [? natives] of India feel that they had something to lose in our rule, in our administration, in our civilisation." To what, one wonders, was Lord Rosebery referring? To the occupation of Chitral, in spite of the famous proclamation? Or to the attack upon local self-government in Calcutta? Or to the new law of sedition? Or to the imprisonment of the Natus without trial? It would be well if Lord Rosebery would obtain some "knowledge of detail" in these important matters.

Mr. Norendro Nath Sen and Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea, members of the Select Committee charged to report on the Calcutta Municipal Bill, have in their "Note of Dissent" composed a most weighty indictment of that measure. They refute two fallacies put forward by the defenders of the Bill. The first was that the motion in Parliament for a Commission of Enquiry involved a blow at the root of local self-government in India because it would stop the enquiry of the Select Committee of the Bengal Council. But the Select Committee made no investigation into the merits of the Bill. Its only business was to consider the details of a measure the principle of which had already been accepted by the Council. The second fallacy consisted in defending some of the most unpopular provisions of the Bill on the ground that they were borrowed from the Bombay Act of 1888. Now not only had that Act been "the natural outgrowth of the systems of municipal administration previously in force in Bombay," very different from those of Calcutta, but the new Bill only borrows some of the most objectionable provisions, "while all those which tend to popularise that system have been altogether left out." The opponents of the Bill do not mind taking from Bombay the rough with the smooth. They object to the rough without the smooth.

The arguments against the new constitution and powers of the General Committee are put with great force in the Note of Dissent. The readers of INDIA are already acquainted with what has been said against the proposal to give the municipality only four out of the twelve members of the General Committee, while four are appointed by the Government and four are to represent the European community. These last are to be specially representative of commercial interests, yet the Marwaris and Bengalee merchants are to have no part therein. As to the contention that this small committee will be less open to corruption than the whole Council, it would seem on the contrary that there would be more room for intrigue in a body of twelve acting in secrecy than in a body of seventy-five acting in the full light of publicity. Nor is it true that the Bill really strengthens the executive, which has been proclaimed as one of its merits. In the opinion of the writers of the Note of Dissent it reduces within narrower limits the power of the executive. What it really does is to make that power irresponsible. But worst founded of all the arguments for the Bill is the cry that it is necessary in order that the European community should have a fair representation. The Europeans will not come forward as candidates either in the wards where they preponderate or in the Chamber of Commerce which has had sometimes to elect Indians, nor has the Government nominated as many members as it had a right to nominate. If the Europeans are not sufficiently represented it is their own fault.

The Government makes a great point of the representation of the *three* distinct interests, the Government, trade and the ratepayers. But in questions of sanitation the two first have an identical point of view. They are for sanitation pure and simple; the ratepayers for sanitation combined with considerations of finance. But those who are to bear the chief cost will be left in a hopeless minority. As for the suggestion that the Bill is necessary for the health of Calcutta, which has of late years become worse, it is pointed out that the mortality throughout Bengal has increased in the same ratio, so that the increase must be due to general causes affecting the whole Province. Moreover Sir Alexander Mackenzie, so far from resting the Bill on the ground of health, referring to the question of opening up the unhealthy and congested areas of Calcutta said, "it is a very difficult one, and no attempt has been made to deal with it in this Bill." The Government of India in giving a general approval to the Bill, expressed its confidence that the opinions of the Corporation and the leading associations would receive careful consideration. The great bulk of these opinions are against the Bill, and experience shows that no measure can succeed in face of the active opposition of the people. The writers of this protest suggest that, in consideration of the many alterations of detail made by the Select Committee, the views of the Corporation and other public bodies should be again invited, and that three months after publication, the Bill

should be referred back to the Committee, as has been done with measures of no greater importance.

No doubt, as Lord George Hamilton triumphantly informed Mr. Maclean on Tuesday "when people get more accurate information on a subject they sometimes change their opinions." And when the people of this country get more accurate information before them on the administration of India, Lord George will not like their changed opinions. Sir Henry Fowler had just elicited from the Secretary of State the fact that Lord Elgin's despatch of May 5, 1898, in which he wrote: "We are not prepared to levy countervailing duties on sugar imported into India," was signed by "the Viceroy and by all the members of his Council." Whereupon Mr. Maclean enquired whether these members were the same as those who "agreed with the Viceroy in reversing his predecessor's decision;" and Lord George launched his sneer at him as aforesaid. But why, then, is this enlightening information not to be found in the Blue-book? As is shown in another column, the information vouchsafed to the public is very far from justifying the right-about face of the Council. That strategic operation appears to have been performed at the peremptory order of the Colonial Secretary. That is what is meant by "the independence of the local authorities." So, too, in the case of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, Lord George shrank from interfering with the "independence" of the Bengal Legislature. In the case of the Natus he refuses to meddle with the "discretion" of the Bombay Government. How much longer is this sort of hypocrisy to last?

Lord George Hamilton made a melancholy exhibition of the temper of Government towards higher education in his answer to Sir William Wedderburn's question on Tuesday about the proposed law college in Bombay. Affiliation of the proposed college was refused, according to Lord George, because the Bombay Government "considered that it was not advisable that the control of the higher legal education should be wholly or partially in private hands." We should have thought that it did not matter where students of law received their education—whether in the Government school or in such a non-Government school as was proposed—so long as they did receive it. The Council of Legal Education provides legal instruction, but it has never for an instant claimed a monopoly. Why the Bombay Government require a monopoly is only too clear: they cannot make their institution pay its way without it. Nor could they afford to job away the professorships, as they have just done, as part of their "steps to improve the Government school of law and to make it equal to all demands." To attain this commanding position, at whatever cost to the public interest, they have not been ashamed to resurrect the rules of affiliation, which have hitherto lain in abeyance.

Mr. C. M. Thacker writes to us as follows:—

Sir Roland K. Wilson in his interesting letter in the last issue of INDIA asks why the Inns of Court should take upon themselves the function of giving instruction in Indian Law. Perhaps Sir Roland will find a satisfactory answer to his query in the speeches of the Lord Chief Justice of England lately delivered in the Gray's Inn Moot Society and in the Society of Arts. Indian students as well as their English brethren that go to practice in India are all members of the Inns of Court, and as such they enjoy the privileges of filling up high posts on the Indian Bench and of practicing at all the Courts, whether at home or abroad, where Indian Law is administered. The Inns of Court, as Lord Russell points out, enjoy these privileges without discharging their corresponding "elementary obligation" of offering to their members teaching in the laws in which they have to practice. It is this state of things which Lord Russell describes as "lamentable" and against which he has been crying, to use his own words, "in season and out of season." But why go so far? The fact that they have, as Sir Roland tells us, made efforts from time to time for the introduction of Indian Law shows that they have been alive to their duty but have not succeeded in discharging it satisfactorily. Your suggestion for an optional paper is an admirable one. It creates no change and will give offence to none. As a matter of fact there exists in the Rules and Regulations of the Inns of Court a provision by which the Council of Legal Education "may at their discretion substitute an examination in Hindu and Mahometan Law or Roman Dutch Law for an examination in English Real and Personal Property or any other of the subjects." (*Vide* Rule 43.) Your second suggestion for a *compulsory* additional paper in Indian Law is also good in a way, but I am afraid I do not quite see the soundness of the principle underlying it. Why should it be made compulsory for Indians only and not for other members of the Inns who may practice at the Indian Bar? It is made no doubt in the interests of Indian students, but precisely for that reason it requires to be examined more closely. In conclusion I beg to repeat with you that the success of any experiment for encouraging the study of Indian Law here will greatly depend upon the kind of Reader or Readers that the Council may appoint.

We accept Mr. Dignum's correction, which we print elsewhere, that the Government has not "refused" to give the Salem Municipal College a grant-in-aid, of which, indeed, we are satisfied that there was no question. It would have been more accurate to say that pressure was brought to bear on the Municipality to decrease the money voted to their own school in order to give a grant to the mission school. What happened was this. For many years, with the assent of Dr. Duncan, the Director of Public Instruction, the Salem Municipality refused a grant, as they were already spending on education more than the limit fixed by Government. Then, after certain changes in the Municipal Council, a grant was made for 1895 and the two succeeding years; but the Council declared that they could make no provision for a grant in 1898, taking into account their other expenditure. Whereupon Dr. Duncan calmly proposed to obtain the money by the abolition of the college department of the municipal second-grade school. Upon this the grant was voted, but has this year been refused by a new Council. Why should the Government propose that a part of the Municipal school should be closed in order that a missionary school should be subsidised—and this although the refusal of the subsidy was for many years approved?

Attention has already been drawn in the pages of INDIA to the abuses connected with prisoners' confessions. It has been noticed that such confessions are seldom made where the case against the prisoner is strong, and are scarcely ever retracted as long as he remains in the hands of the police. The *Pioneer*, whose powerful advocacy is very welcome, does not scruple to assert that these confessions are due to the pressure of the police, who persuade the more simple prisoners against whom they have no evidence that denial will be treated as contumacy, while confession will ensure a nominal or lenient sentence. Nor do they dare to retract while they are still in the hands of the police. To remedy this evil, the Sessions Judge of Umballa makes the following proposal:—

I think it would be an excellent thing and would add much to the value of confession if all magistrates were directed to see that prisoners brought up for confession were not again remanded to police custody, but sent direct to gaol, and to explain carefully before recording their statements that this will be done. No precaution to remove police influence for the moment is of any avail if the prisoner knows that when the process of recording his statement is over he will once more be returned into the hands of the police.

It is the want of such a rule that has made the precautions hitherto taken—such as that the police officer in whose custody the prisoner was should be absent—of no avail. The prisoner knows only too well that, once more in the clutches of the police, he will be made to pay dearly if he retracts his confession. If, on the other hand, the Sessions Judge of Umballa has his way, the prisoner will know that he will be at once remitted to gaol where it will be of no importance to the officials whether he has confessed or not. The *Pioneer* points out that this anxiety to obtain confessions where the evidence is weak is a result of measuring the good or bad work done by the percentage of convictions secured in cases sent up by the police for trial. But what a light do these extorted confessions and this fear of what may happen to those who retract throw on the boasted glories of our administration of justice in India. Of what use is it to have just judges sitting in high places if below them there is nothing but ravening corruption?

But even when the Indian does reach the courts where just judgment is assured he may find a new oppression in the very safeguards designed to prevent injustice. Assuredly one Indian plaintiff whose case is commented on in the *Pioneer* must agree that "the law's delay" is among the greatest of evils. In 1894 a suit was commenced in the Munsiff's Court at Muttra to recover goods—or Rs. 10 as compensation—which it was alleged were wrongfully seized to pay a fine levied on someone else and not on the owner. The suit was brought against the Secretary of State, and the question arose whether he was liable for the acts of subordinate officers of Government. The munsiff in February, 1895, and on appeal the subordinate judge of Agra in the same year, decided in favour of the plaintiff. In October a further appeal was filed in the

High Court, where three years afterwards two judges found themselves unable to agree, so that the verdict still remained with the plaintiff. Finally in the present year the matter came before three judges, who, after some hours had been spent in discussing the question of jurisdiction, on which they reserved judgment, found that the original plaint disclosed no cause of action. So that, after four trials, the plaintiff has failed to recover his Rs. 10, while the great question of constitutional law remains unsolved.

In truth, the *Pioneer*, the leading Anglo-Indian organ, gives a very different picture of our rule in India from that which we are accustomed to in this country. While we thus see that the Indian police show all the vices of the *régime* we overthrew—while our system of appeals introduces new delays and uncertainties into the administration of justice, we find in the same number evidence of the evils that flow from the introduction of English methods into Courts "modelled to suit English commercial instinct and business habit." In old times the yeomen of the Punjab held the soil under practically inalienable occupancy rights. Under our strict enforcement of contract the land is passing into the hands of the money-lenders, and officials and ready writers are striving to find a remedy. Sir Charles Roe proposes to enforce for members of the family or tribe a right of pre-emption, which already exists by tribal custom. The *Pioneer* believes that the Government intend to fix a term for all mortgages at the end of which the mortgagor should receive back his land free of encumbrances, while that journal itself proposes that the owner of the land should, when dispossessed, be retained as the occupying tenant at a fixed rent. But it is easier to bring about than to undo such evils as these—especially when the very remedies may produce new inconveniences.

Two judicial appointments at Madras have occasioned not a little keen comment in the Press, as well as in private circles. Mr. Michell, as was anticipated, has been appointed to succeed Mr. Justice Shephard. There is no objection to Mr. Michell on the point of merits. But strong objection is taken to his appointment, after such deliberate waiting, just eight days before the closing of the High Court for the midsummer vacation, so that Mr. Justice Michell will draw more than Rs. 7,500 for half-a-dozen days' work. A like objection is urged against the appointment of Mr. Smith to be Chief Judge of the Small Cause Court, for Mr. Smith will draw his Rs. 2,000 a month for the next two months vacation. In these days of tight money there might have been a very reasonable saving in both cases. But the *Madras Standard* complains that "the appointment of Mr. Smith is a greater scandal in the face of the acknowledged ability and qualifications of Mr. M. O. Parthasarthy Aiyangar, the third Judge," who has had "experience as a Judge and as Chief Judge." Says the *Madras Standard*:

> After this, let anyone repeat the question: "What is the test of an advocate's capacity?" Our answer is: "The colour of his skin."

It is exceedingly unfortunate that cases of this sort should arise, to cast contempt on the Queen's Proclamation of equal treatment, and to excite just irritation among a people so keen to recognise fair dealing and to resent unfair discrimination.

Sir Antony MacDonnell, with his usual perspicacity and sympathy, has just shown an example that cannot be too widely imitated by other officials in places of high authority. He has a Court of Wards Bill on the anvil, but has found that local opinion could not be sufficiently gathered before the exodus to the hills. So, he says, "it seemed to me that it would be rushing the matter to get it laid before the Council by this date." Further:—

> At the same time I became aware that there was a certain amount of uncertainty and opposition to a part of the provisions of the Bill; and all these things satisfied me it is not desirable to hasten the measure. During the last fortnight or three weeks I have had interviews with some of the more important associations and gentlemen interested in the Bill; and the explanations I have been able to give have removed many of the misapprehensions which prevailed. I have no reason to anticipate that there will be in Select Committee or afterwards any serious opposition to the substance or principle of the Bill. But that is all the more reason why adequate time should be given in the matter. I therefore propose that the Select Committee should meet when we come down to the plains in July. The further progress of the Bill will depend upon what happens then.

It is painful to be reduced to praising a Lieutenant-Governor for such an obviously common-sense course of procedure. "We wish," says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, "Sir John Woodburn had, like his brother of the North-West Provinces, had interviews with the leading men of Calcutta who are so vitally interested in the Municipal Bill."

In a recent issue (INDIA, April 21, p. 197), while drawing attention to the numerous assaults made by Europeans on Indians, we referred to the speech of Lord Stanley of Alderley in the House of Lords on February 14 (INDIA, February 17, p. 84), and commented on the scurvy treatment of the subject by Lord Onslow. Lord Stanley made several suggestions by way of remedy. One was "that all these charges of outrages by soldiers should be tried by court-martial, with open doors, instead of by juries, whose race feelings might prompt them to shield the accused." Lord Onslow stated in reply that "the Government of India had been consulted in this matter, and they were of opinion that there was no ground for taking any special measures as regards British troops in India." So Lord Stanley of Alderley was shouldered off. But what is this we read in the *Pioneer* of April 21?

> In view of the frequent infringement of the rules regulating the issue of shooting passes to soldiers, the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Forces in Bengal has issued an order that in future all such cases shall be tried by Court Martial.

Sir Baker Russell's previous admonition (INDIA, vol. x, p. 170) has now been stiffened into a specific order, just as Lord Stanley suggested; and the Government of India has changed its "opinion." Lord Onslow looks rather foolish now. And so does Lord George Hamilton, his chief, for Lord George, as we reminded our readers on April 21, assured the House of Commons a year ago that "passes to go out shooting are only given to men of good character and under very stringent regulations."

The *Pioneer* takes it as "quite certain that it can be no apprehension of trans-frontier commotions or disturbances that has arrested the movement of the troops" detailed as Chitral reliefs. We should be glad to believe that this view is correct. Our contemporary seems to rely on the fact that Captain MacMahon, the Political Officer in succession to Major Deane, "has been up to Dir and over most of the Chitral road, and has found the whole interior profoundly quiet." True, "it is always calmest after a storm;" but it is always significantly calm before a storm. The relief, we are told, "will certainly take place in the autumn"—that is, unless Colonel Thorburn's report modifies the Government's intentions; and if the delay be irksome to the garrison it will be counterbalanced by their return in more suitable weather. Still, as our contemporary says "it seems a pity that the countermanding orders could not have come sooner, for, apart from the unnecessary hardship that is caused to individuals, a reversal of plan at the eleventh hour must stimulate curiosity, and very possibly misapprehension, beyond the frontier."

Like his two immediate predecessors, Lord Curzon has delivered a blast against the excessive telegraphic rates between India and Europe. In the Indian Budget debate, he pronounced the tariff "inimical to trade, a barrier to the ever-growing intercourse between India and the mother country, and obsolete and anomalous in itself." The writer on "Indian Affairs" in the *Times* regards the evidence as "affording a justification for" Lord Curzon's comments, "ample in degree, and somewhat startling in kind." The Madras Chamber of Commerce, in a letter to the Government of India, pointed out that, while the charge for messages between England and South Australia *viâ* India is 4s. 9d. a word, the charge between England and India is 4s.; that is to say, the second and longer half of the distance of the Australian message costs only 9d. additional. It is not necessary to quote the *Times* writer's figures to illustrate the effect of high prices upon business messages; they are sufficiently striking, but the depressing effect is matter of course. The point is, what is to be done? So long back as 1893, the Government of India declared that "the reduction of the tariff to India is a matter of Imperial importance." Its delegates to the Budapest International Conference in 1896 urged a reduction, and in 1897 it expressed its "great regret that some reduction had not been secured." Probably, as the Indian mercantile experts think, and as the *Times* writer seems to agree, the best solution is to grasp the nettle, and offer a guarantee to share the loss.

"THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR."[1]

ENGLISH experience of war in Afghanistan has been singularly and most deservedly costly and bitter. The first Afghan war, according to the Report of the East India Committee, was a "war of robbery," "made by a people without their knowledge against another people who had committed no offence," and the effects on India were deplorable in the extreme. But in spite of that dire experience a like blunder, deliberate and unjustifiable, was committed forty years later in the second Afghan war, and ever since then the same wicked spirit has been manifested on and beyond the borders with similar results. One is not sanguine enough to anticipate that the wrongheadedness of statesmen is curable by a course of historical study. But Colonel Hanna's very able and trustworthy history of the second Afghan war may, it is to be hoped, be widely read, and the sober judgment of the constituencies may in the long run succeed in restraining the madness of their Indian officials whether in India or in England.

It is only the first volume of Colonel Hanna's work that is now before us. The main part of it is occupied with an exposition of the causes of the war, a few of the final chapters dealing with the condition of the country, the unpreparedness of the aggressors, and the mobilisation of the Anglo-Indian troops. To the crime of forcing on an unjust and unnecessary war Lord Lytton added the crime of inadequate preparation, "entirely underestimating the resistance with which he would meet, and consequently the length of time that the struggle would endure." It is no public satisfaction to shift the blame of his infatuation to the shoulders of his military and political advisers; but it is well to emphasise the astonishing fact that these were not the Commander-in-Chief (Sir Frederick Haines) or the Military Member of Council (Sir Samuel Browne)—a fact that suggests an ugly commentary on Lord Lytton's personal responsibility. Colonel Hanna shows that "inherent unfitness or culpable unreadiness for the prosecution of aggressive war" attached to every department—transport, ordnance, medical equipment, intelligence, followers, clothing, and depôts; that the officers had but the vaguest knowledge of the conditions of the theatre of operations; and that the natural and known characteristics of the independent tribes were ignored or defied. On the present occasion, however, we are less concerned with those astounding negligences than with the train of events that led to the outbreak of war.

Lord Lawrence's policy, we are told, is dead—dead and cannot be revived. So much the worse, if it be true. That policy stood severe assaults before it was temporarily overcome. First came General Jacob's Memorandum in 1856, fallaciously urging the occupation of Quetta with a field force, so as to preclude the possibility of successful invasion (as if anybody wanted to invade us), to gain moral control over Afghanistan, to conciliate the Afghans, and to attract the commerce of Central Asia. "Time has falsified these predictions." Several years later, Sir Henry Green, Jacob's successor in Sindh, took up Jacob's plan, in a modified form: he wished the adoption of measures in Baluchistan and the Bolan such as should almost imperceptibly lead us to Quetta. Both Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief rejected the new proposals in well-weighed terms. Eight months afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel (now General Sir) Peter Lumsden, though he could see through much of the folly of Jacob's plan, tried to induce the Government of India to take possession of the strategical key to Afghanistan by relieving the Amír of the Kuram and Khost valleys. Again Sir John Lawrence asserted his fixed determination to take no steps calculated to alarm Afghan susceptibilities, or to violate the letter or the spirit of existing agreements. Another nine months, and Sir Henry Rawlinson's famous Memorandum was pressed on the attention of the British Government. Sir Henry, not really a practical soldier, wished the erection of a strong fortress to cover the frontier and to delay an invader, but not at the expense of Afghan good-will; and even he never contemplated a monster fortress like Quetta. On June 12, 1874, however, Sir Bartle Frere revived Rawlinson's recommendations, omitting the essential condition on which Rawlinson made them dependent. "Boldly setting aside all scruples based upon the plighted word of three successive viceroys, he not only urged the British Government to take these steps"—to establish English agencies in Afghanistan, and to occupy Quetta and convert it into a strong military post—"with or without the Amír's consent, but to depute at once to Herat, from the Persian side, a military officer with three or four assistants, and to convert this temporary mission into a permanent one if the Ruler of that city could be brought to consent to such a measure—that Ruler being Shere Ali's rebellious son, Yakub Khan, who was thus to be encouraged to look upon himself as an independent prince, and to persist in setting his father's authority at defiance." The realisation of this monstrous policy—so thoroughly at variance with Lord Lawrence's—was begun by Lord Salisbury's letter of January 22, 1875, to the Indian Government, and, though delayed by the earnest opposition of the Indian Government, was set in active operation by the appointment of Lord Lytton to succeed Lord Northbrook, whose resignation may be directly connected with the predominance of the new policy.

What was the position of Shere Ali? By the treaty of 1857, the Amír Dost Mahomed conceded to the Indian Government the right to maintain a vakil or Native envoy, permanently at Kabul—a Native, *not* (expressly not) a European officer. In 1863 Shere Ali established himself as the successor of Dost Mahomed; in 1867 he was driven out, but finally re-established himself in 1868. In 1869 he had a conference with Lord Mayo at Ambala, and, though he did not obtain all he hoped for, yet Lord Mayo wrote in July 1869:

> The Amír, from the moment of his return to his own country, has evinced the most fervent desire to comply with the wishes of the British Government as to the administration of his kingdom. . . . . He has, against all Afghan precedent and doctrine, reconciled himself to many of his opponents. . . . . He has evinced a desire to carry out useful administrative and financial reforms in many parts of his kingdom, the accomplishment of which, should he not force them too quickly upon his people, on which point we have repeatedly cautioned him, will go far to establish what we so much desire, a strong, just, and merciful Government in Afghanistan.

Shere Ali desired to stand well with the British Government. And Colonel Hanna shows how steadily he adhered to this principle, under most shameless treatment from Lord Lytton, down to the very last. It is true that he was vexed at the Seistan award and at certain proceedings of the Indian Government at Khelat, that he was annoyed at the intervention of Lord Northbrook in favour of Yakub Khan, and at his transmission of presents to the Mir of Wakhan without his knowledge or consent, that he felt certain treatment of his envoy at Simla as reflecting on himself, and that he gradually came to distrust the British policy as purely selfish. But history is unable to point to a single act of Shere Ali's that can be honestly interpreted as in any way hostile to the British Government.

The course of Lord Lytton's conduct towards Shere Ali is marked by an overbearing spirit, by an ignorance of Oriental ways, by a strange misreading of plain facts and a lamentable twisting of plain words, and by a steady increase of unreasonable and unfair demands, such as no just mind can contemplate without a burning sense of shame and indignation. On January 22, 1875, Lord Salisbury wanted British agents in Herat and Kandahar; on October 10, 1876, Lord Lytton demanded of the Amír, through Atta Mahomed, that Afghanistan should be freely opened to all Englishmen, official and unofficial, and that the Amír should actually provide for their safety, barring isolated accidents. At the Peshawar Conference the arguments by which Sir Henry Pelly was instructed to support Lord Lytton's demands "were both false and cruel."

> The man who could accuse the Amír of infringing the Treaty of 1855 by acts which the whole course of the subsequent relations between Great Britain and Afghanistan had sanctioned, and who could not see that the injury to the friendship established by that Treaty lay with the State that was endeavouring to give to the term meanings which Lord Lawrence never dreamed of attaching to it, was a man impervious to reasons and proof, because blind to honesty and justice.

The full truth of this comment can only be felt by readers of Colonel Hanna's narrative, where the specific details are enumerated. The splendid behaviour of the dying Envoy Nur Mahomed, in the face of misrepresentation of his master, rises to the height of tragedy—"tragic prologue to a still more tragic drama."

It stands to the credit of Sir Henry Norman, Sir Arthur

[1] "The Second Afghan War, 1878-79-80: Its Causes, its Conduct, and its Consequences." By Colonel H. B. Hanna, formerly belonging to the Punjab Frontier Force, and late commanding at Delhi. Vol. I. (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co.)

Hobhouse, and Sir William Muir, that they entered strong protests against the impolicy of forcing an Embassy upon the Amír and accepted as genuine and valid the Amír's reasons for deprecating the presence of British officers in Afghanistan. Their opposition delayed the *dénoument;* but their successors removed the brake. Colonel Hanna shows, in instructive parallelism, the coincidence of the developments of Russo-Turkish antagonisms in Europe with the gradual progress of Lord Lytton's policy—which suggests how completely an Imperial movement the whole business was, and that therefore the whole cost and consequences should have been borne by the Imperial Government. It is unnecessary to go into the Russo-Afghan correspondence of which so much capital was made against the Amír; for, as Colonel Hanna says, up to the outbreak of hostilities, "from first to last, it contains no hint of any desire on the Amír's part to make a bargain with the Russian Government; no trace, even in the letters written in his darkest days, of a readiness to barter away the independence of his country in exchange for any help to be rendered to himself." The Russian Mission, which grew out of the European complications, though received with outward royal welcome by the Amír, was evidently only submitted to with intense private dislike. "That, under so great a burden of public anxiety and private grief, the Amír still opposed a firm front to the Russian demands, and forebore to lend himself to their plans for weakening and embarrassing the Government of whose conduct towards himself he had good reason to complain; gave him a fresh claim on British consideration and entitled him to very different treatment than he was fated to receive." Then followed the Chamberlain Mission and the stoppage of Cavagnari at Ali Masjid. We commend Colonel Hanna's work most cordially. It is an absolute exposure of the laborious injustice whereby the Second Afghan war was compassed, and places the Afghan Amír and the English Viceroy in a dramatic contrast humiliating to Englishmen.

SACRIFICED TO MAURITIUS.

By Harold Cox.

It is not often that a Government department publishes such a refreshingly candid Blue-book as that which Lord George Hamilton has just given to the public. The essence of the case for the new countervailing duties, as presented by the Viceroy and Sir James Westland, was the importance of preserving Indian industries. This is clearly set out in the formal statement of objects and reasons for the Bill, annexed to the text of the Act, which declares that the importation of bounty-fed sugars "appears to be seriously affecting the important sugar industries of India," and that the Bill had been prepared "with the object of enabling the Government of India to impose countervailing duties on bounty-fed articles at the port of importation and thus to preserve the sugar cultivation and industries of this country." This is signed "J. Westland." Lord Curzon with equal emphasis declared, "It is in the interests of India, and of India alone, that this legislation has been proposed by us." And again, after referring to the question of Mauritius and to Imperial problems, he adds: "All I have to say here is that our conduct has not been determined by those considerations. We are exercising our own legislative competence of our own initiative." In the same spirit Lord George Hamilton when questioned in the House of Commons took pains to convey the impression that the initiative for the new act had really come from India, and declined "to interfere with the independence of the local legislature."

After this unfortunate departure from strict accuracy it seems to have occurred to Lord George Hamilton that he ought to make atonement by doing penance. And the penance he has imposed upon himself and upon Lord Curzon is the publication of the truth. It is all set out in the Blue-book in despatches that even the hastiest reader cannot misconstrue.

The very first despatch that is printed shows that on May 5, 1898, the Government of India were emphatically opposed to countervailing duties. Six months later on October 31, 1898, the Government of India still had "no clear evidence before them that the increasing sugar imports have had, or are tending to such serious consequences." Another three months elapsed before the Government of India again expressed an opinion on the question, and it is then Lord Curzon himself who writes. He says: "How far these effects are likely to be permanent it is impossible to say." Lord Curzon goes on to describe the steps he is taking to enquire into the whole subject and adds "With these data before us we shall *hereafter* be in a position to express a final or at any rate a more confident opinion on the policy of imposing countervailing duties." It is therefore clear that as late as January 26, when this despatch was written, Lord Curzon was not yet convinced that the case for countervailing duties had been made out. He wished to make careful enquiries before taking action. Yet on February 25 he telegraphed "Propose to legislate at once on American model."

Without even looking at the Blue-book any man of common sense would not hesitate to assert that it was impossible for Lord Curzon between January 26 and February 25 to complete his enquiries on such an intricate subject, affecting such an immense area of territory. The evidence of the Blue-book merely confirms this obviously sound assumption. On January 26 the enquiries to which Lord Curzon alluded were (*a*) an enquiry by the Department of Revenue and Agriculture set on foot by Lord Elgin in October; (*b*) an enquiry by the Director-General of Statistics which Lord Curzon proposed to set on foot. Of the results of enquiry (*b*) there is not a sign in the Blue-book. Out of enquiry (*a*) the only result which came to hand between January 26 and February 25 was the reply from the North-West Provinces. If, therefore, the countervailing duties were imposed in the "interests of India and of India alone," it must have been on the evidence furnished by the Government of the North-West Provinces.

Before considering what that evidence was it is desirable to make an important caution. The North-West Provinces is the one province of India which has any important export trade in sugar. In the case of this province therefore the local Government, if inclined to be protectionist, might be expected to look upon the question from the point of view of the producer rather than that of the consumer. Such a possibility would of course be apparent to the mind of an intelligent Viceroy like Lord Curzon, and if he found the North-West Provinces demanding protection for its sugar growers he would be in duty bound to wait and hear what the other provinces of India had to say to a proposal for a general tax on the whole of India for the benefit of this single province. If therefore the Government of the North-West Provinces in their despatch dated February 13 had emphatically demanded protection, that demand would have been no justification for the Viceroy's decision given on February 25. But as a matter of fact the Government of the North-West Provinces did not demand protection. Their reply is very long and very detailed, and is interspersed with many speculations as to the injuries that may conceivably be done to the sugar industry of the North-West Provinces if so-and-so should happen. But when it comes to the question of summing up the actual evidence, the Lieut.-Governor declares emphatically "that further experience is necessary—possibly the current year's experience will suffice—to the formation of a clear and precise judgment."

That is to say the only local Government that gave an opinion in any degree favourable to countervailing duties asked on February 13 for at least a year's more experience. On February 25 Lord Curzon decided to legislate at once.

This is the proof which the Blue-book itself furnishes that the new duties were not decided upon in the interests of India. The proof that they were decided on in the interests of Mauritius is equally crushing. On January 7 Mr. Chamberlain sent a long letter to the India Office and asked Lord George Hamilton to send a copy of it to Lord Curzon "with such support as Lord George Hamilton may see fit to give it." In this letter Mr. Chamberlain describes India as the "natural" market for Mauritius sugar—though he does not explain why it should be "natural" for India to buy her sugar from Mauritius instead of growing it herself—and he goes on to suggest that the Indian Government should "countervail bounty-fed sugar, or give preference to the honestly grown cane-sugar of the British Colonies." Lord George Hamilton forwards this letter and both by despatch and telegram

urges Lord Curzon to give effect to it. It is sufficient to quote the telegram:—"In this request I agree and consider that early steps should be taken to deal with this important subject." The Viceroy was barely allowed time to receive and read the despatch announced in this telegram before a still more urgent telegraphic message is sent. "Desire to know if you propose to pass an Act this Session imposing countervailing duties." That was sent on February 24. On February 25 as already mentioned Lord Curzon replied, "Propose to legislate at once."

The only comment worth adding to this piece of history will be found in the following figures, also taken from the Blue-book:—

IMPORTS OF SUGAR INTO INDIA (in tons).

From	Average of five years, 1890-95.	Year 1895-96.	Year 1896-97.	Year 1897-98.	Eleven months, 1898-99.
Mauritius..	71,610	78,600	83,300	88,900	98,550
Germany..	16,750	36,000	37,950	60,250	19,850
Austria ..	1,050	250	5,800	47,300	46,100

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

ON Monday last Sir M. Bhownaggree showed an interesting anxiety with regard to the finances of India. He put a question in the House of Commons to Lord George Hamilton as to why the Royal Commissioners on Indian Expenditure, appointed in 1895, had not made their report. This is a censorious world, and while I do not like to show unworthy suspicion I cannot help thinking that Lord George Hamilton was rather pleased than otherwise at having this question addressed to him. Mr. Goschen once introduced into a full dress debate the phrase "a put-up job" (to the infinite disgust of Mr. Gladstone) and that phrase must have occurred to not a few when this sudden anxiety on the part of Sir M. Bhownaggree was made manifest. Lord George Hamilton read a letter which he had sent to the Secretary of the Commission in question expressing the "regret" of the Government that no report had been received, and when he had trolled forth the resounding periods of his own epistolary masterpiece Mr. Gibson Bowles let the cat out of the bag by asking, "Who is the chairman of this Commission?" Lord George at first made a pretence of not wishing to mention the name and replied, "I think my hon. friend can ascertain." But they were both determined to have the name announced with all possible publicity and so Mr. Gibson Bowles retorted, "I am trying to ascertain." Thereupon the Indian Secretary, with a fine imitation of the man who has something wrung from him much against his will, answered, "Well, the chairman was Lord Welby."

It may very possibly happen that readers unacquainted with the ins and outs of "the game" at Westminster will wonder why these questions were put. No one can suppose for a moment that Sir Mancherjee cares when the report of this Commission will appear. It is scarcely conceivable that he could ask the question without having been instigated thereto by the India Office. And the absurdity of supposing that Mr. Gibson Bowles cares two straws about the matter is self-evident. And yet the explanation of the little farce is simple enough. The Tories hate Lord Welby. He is known to be one of the ablest and most high-minded of our public men, but that counts for nothing in view of the fact that he has committed what is, from the Tory standpoint, the unpardonable sin of becoming the Chairman of the London County Council, and a Progressive too! The London County Council is, over here, badgered, thwarted and insulted by the Tories in somewhat the same way as is the Indian National Congress in India. Of course the attacks cannot be so open and brutal, for we have representative institutions (of a sort) in England, but as Lord Welby has seen fit to associate himself with what is regarded as the wrong side of this body so hated by your sound Tory he has to pay the price.

The real motive of this attack on Lord Welby is made delightfully evident in a leading article in the *Times* on the subject. It remarks in its ornate and elephantine manner:

> Lord Welby is a most distinguished public servant, and a man, as all the world knows, of great ability.

When the *Times* uses civil phrases of this sort you may be sure that something unpleasant is coming, and so after the inspired leader-writer has enlarged upon the length of time which has elapsed since the last meeting of the Commission, he adds:—

> In the meantime its chairman, Lord Welby, has accepted what we must suppose are the onerous as well as the honourable duties of presiding over the London County Council.

Quite so! Had he abstained from this, he and his Commission might have postponed its report until the middle of next century and no question or protest would have come from Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree. Nor do I suppose that Mr. Gibson Bowles would have shown this new yearning for information about Indian finance. There is, however, another and a more instructive sentence in the same leading article in the *Times*:—

> Whether or not it is desirable and expedient that the Imperial Parliament, which has now become a democratic assembly, dominated by the popular vote, should control the affairs and the policy of India, the fact remains that it is in the House of Commons that the ultimate authority in that regard is vested.

Since when did the *Times* preach this doctrine? Simply since the moment when it found it desirable to attack Lord Welby. Only the other day it was preaching another doctrine with regard to the sugar duty question, and declaring that the question should not come within the purview of the House. But let me take a stronger case. I well remember the night when the House of Commons decided in favour of simultaneous examinations in this country and in India for the Indian civil service. The Secretary of State for the day, acting on the advice of the officials of the India Office, snapped his fingers at the House of Commons, and that vote has been contemptuously ignored ever since. Did the *Times* then talk about the ultimate authority with regard to India being vested in the House of Commons? Not it. That was not the game at the particular moment.

I was a good deal amused by a couple of questions and answers in the House of Commons on Tuesday. Sir Henry Fowler asked the Indian Secretary whether the despatch from the Government of India, dated May 5, 1898, had been signed by all the members of the Viceroy's Council. The despatch, I may explain, has reference to the sugar bounties question. "Yes," replied Lord George, "the despatch was signed by the Viceroy and all the members of the Council." Then up rose Mr. Maclean, who "snipes" with such deadly persistency on the flank of the badgered Minister. "May I ask," he began in a tone of musing soliloquy, "whether the members of the Council are the same as were on the Council of the previous Viceroy?" Then came this "gem" of philosophical insight from Lord George: "Yes, they are the same, but when persons receive more accurate information they sometimes change their minds." That is so, no doubt. But these gentlemen reported in absolutely opposite senses about the same matter within three or four months, and what makes the matter the more interesting is the fact that the change of mind synchronised with a change of Viceroy. I wonder what was the "more accurate information" which Lord Curzon is supposed to have conveyed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MISSIONARY SCHOOLS IN INDIA.

To THE EDITOR OF "INDIA."

SIR,—A paragraph in your issue of February 24 relating to what is spoken of as "the policy of unduly favouring mission schools" in Madras contains such a misrepresentation—doubtless unintentional—of the facts of the case, so far as the London Mission High School, Salem, is concerned that I would ask you to allow me to give the true version. The paragraph states that "the municipality of Salem has established a municipal college, which is described as a successful institution; but the Government now refuses to give it a grant-in-aid, apparently because there exists in the same place a mission school, subsidised by the L. M. S." The statement relating to the alleged action of Government is utterly incorrect. Government has *not* refused to give the municipal college a grant-in-aid. The Municipal Council, on the other hand, decided in December last to withdraw a grant of Rs. 450 from the mission school, and, as manager of the mission school, I have protested against the action of the Municipal Council.—Yours, etc,

ARTHUR A. DIGNUM.

London Mission, Salem.

[Some remarks upon this letter will be found in "Notes and News.—Ed., INDIA.]

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, April 29.

Since the expansion of the Legislative Councils it has been customary for Provincial Governments to discuss their respective Budgets within a short time after the Imperial Financial Statement has been discussed in the Viceregal Legislative Council. Accordingly Bengal, Madras and the United Provinces of the North-West and Oudh have already published and discussed their Budgets for the current year. Bombay alone has not discussed its Budget yet. In fact in this Presidency the practice is to introduce the financial statement during the autumn session in Poona, about the middle of July or the beginning of August, a period when the subject is only of

antiquarian interest, and when the various collectorates are on the eve of submitting their next year's Budget to the central Presidency authority. But when Bombay legislators in Council assembled do talk over their Budget, they do so with a full knowledge of details. Perhaps it may not be generally known that each Provincial Government prepares its Budget in detail for submission to the Government of India. It comprises hundreds of pages of figures. The central financial authorities take these as a basis for preparing their own general statement. The details are all boiled down to fit in with the Imperial exhibition of the annual finances. These details are available in the form of a heavy Blue-book called "Civil Estimates" for each Province. The practice of the Bombay Government is to furnish each legislator with a copy of these detailed Civil Estimates of the Presidency, along with the General Financial Statement prepared by the Revenue Member of the Executive Council. These details, which contain a mass of information and actually exhibit the accounts for one year, the revised estimates for the next, and Budget estimates for the current year, throw no little light on the financial situation generally and greatly help councillors to discourse on the Budget with knowledge. Their criticism is well informed. It serves a double object. It enlightens legislators and saves public time. For many a financial topic which might otherwise be criticised in ignorance of facts is judiciously left alone, and criticism is directed only to such matters as require further elucidation. But as this furnishing of details takes some time the discussion of the Bombay Budget is delayed till July or August. The other Provinces do not follow the practice of Bombay, and are therefore able to place their respective Budgets early before the Councils in April. But councillors of these Provinces suffer under a distinct disadvantage owing to the want of the necessary detailed estimates.

It is, however, satisfactory to note that Bengal, Madras, and the North-West Provinces have each issued a somewhat prosperous Budget. The current year is a normal year. Everything tends to yield a normal revenue, while there does not seem to be any expectation of abnormal expenditure. Under such conditions it goes without saying that the cash balances are again reaching the statutory minimum. This is the principal feature of these Budgets. No doubt they have all been able to recoup the balances with the aid of the Imperial Government, which, once in a way, has relaxed its Shylock grip, and become generous because of the fat surplus. Properly speaking, the grant in aid is in reality the provincial surplus itself. But as the Imperial Government is the master of the purse of the provincials, the latter are in the position of slaves and the former in that of the slave-owner. The slaves earn their wages by their labour; but all the profit goes to the taskmaster. It entirely depends on the taskmaster whether he will give the slave a bonus or share of the profits of his own labour. This is the present situation. The provincials, like the slaves, have to be grateful for any little bonus or gratuity, in the shape of grants in aid, which their Imperial masters may throw into their lap. But one cannot say how soon a deterioration in Imperial finance, through one cause or another, may neutralise the present generosity. It is impossible to say how soon the provincial sheep will again be stripped naked of their wool, leaving the poor things shivering in the cold of penury. That this fear haunts the provincials was made only too plain by the speeches of the chiefs presiding over the different Provinces. Let us hope that their protests may produce a radical change in the practice or principle of Provincial allotments.

The *Times of India*, with characteristic "spread eagleism", has started another scare. This time it is a secret treaty said to have been entered into by the Shah of Persia with Russia for the acquisition of the port of Bunder Abbas. It seems that the *Times of India* is inspired by or in the confidence of the Simla Foreign Office, of which the portfolio is held by our "Imperialist" Viceroy. A passage on Bunder Abbas from his book on "Persia" is approvingly quoted. Two long articles have already appeared during the week, the obvious tendency of which is to proclaim that we must beware of the Cossack swooping down opposite Muscat some fine day and leaving the British lion to fret and fume. We are asked in the best Chauvinist style to keep unceasing watch and ward over that desert post so that the British may occupy it. Perhaps there is already going on in the press on your side a discussion on this new hare the *Times of India* has started. While the *Spectator* is doing its best to offer a counsel of perfection and urge the powers that be to remove all distrust of Russia, here is the *Times of India* throwing this Bunder Abbas bombshell into your midst. The *Bombay Gazette*, not to be left behind, quotes some passages from a Transcaspian journal which declares that it is the intention of Russia to find an outlet for its increasing trade and population in the South of Persia; and that England will have to suffer if she obstructs her course. "India will be threatened." Poor India! Here, again, it will be perceived, we shall later on be asked to pay the piper for the naval squadron and other resources of civilisation which the Imperial Government may, in pursuance of its Imperial policy, choose to keep as reserve in the Persian Gulf. We have been for years inveighing against the cost of the Persian embassy. Nothing has yet been done to remove that burden from our poor shoulders. Meanwhile here is this Bunder Abbas boom which, with the masterful Lord Curzon at the head of Government, is most likely to land us in another liability under the pretext of safeguarding India against the aggression of the Cossack from the Gulf and Herat.

The Select Committee is going to present its report on the Calcutta Municipal Bill next week. It is to be feared that there will be a tough contest in the Bengal Legislative Council between the officials and the non-officials. It is matter for regret that the Bengal Government should persist in its attempt to upset the existing machinery of local self-government and substitute for it the opposite. The people will not keep silence. If this retrograde Bill does not undergo material modification on second reading, it is likely to lead to a stronger and more persistent agitation, the end of which it is not difficult to forecast. We all hope that wiser counsels may prevail, and that the influence of the Viceroy may be instrumental in saving local self-government in Calcutta from its impending doom. It would be an evil day for all India if the Calcutta Corporation were snuffed out.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

THE DELAY OF THE REPORT.

In our Parliamentary Report will be found questions asked and answers given on Monday last, May 15, with reference to the delay of the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure.

Commenting on the matter the *Times* (May 16) wrote:—

Whether or not it is desirable and expedient that the Imperial Parliament, which has now become a democratic assembly, dominated by the popular vote, should control the affairs and the policy of India, the fact remains that it is in the House of Commons that the ultimate authority in that regard is vested. There are a few members of that House, but very few, who pretend to have any competent knowledge of Indian affairs, and we greatly fear that these are shunned by their fellows as possessing the unhappy gift of special knowledge, and thus presenting themselves as bores to the average mind of their indifferent and uninstructed colleagues. The House, it must be admitted, uses its power, in regard to Indian affairs, with lenity and consideration. It is, as a rule, content to accept the judgment of official experts, unless where larger interests are involved and other elements of opinion are brought in. But when an enquiry on specific questions is instituted under the authority of Parliament, relating to matters of great public importance, the Legislature has some reason to complain if, after the lapse of several years, nothing has, in fact, been done to carry out the instructions of the Crown. Yesterday a curious instance of such a failure to give effect to an investigation ordered by the Secretary of State, in accordance with the wishes of Parliament, was brought up in the House of Commons. Sir M. Bhownaggree asked Mr. Balfour whether he could say why the Royal Commission appointed in 1895 to enquire into Indian expenditure had not yet made any report, and whether it was to be hoped that some conclusion would be arrived at without further delay. The reply of the Secretary of State for India consisted in reading a letter addressed by him to the secretary to the Royal Commission. The contents are very remarkable indeed. The Commission was appointed in 1895, before the resignation of the late Government, and Lord Welby, a most distinguished public servant, and a man, as all the world knows, of great ability, was chosen as chairman. The subjects into which the Commission was directed to enquire were of very great and urgent importance to the Government of India and to the Indian Administration here. But, after Lord Welby and his colleagues had considered the problems referred to them, they adjourned their proceedings as long ago as July, 1897, and, from that day to this, they have never agreed upon any report or even intimated the fact of their irreconcilable disagreement, assuming that to be the cause of the delay, to the Crown. The Secretary of State for India, who has certainly not exhibited any unreasonable impatience in this matter, has been at length compelled to communicate personally with the individual members of the Commission, and to ask them whether or not they intend, "by the submission of a report to her Majesty, to discharge the functions entrusted to them." It is added that, on receipt of their replies, he "will consider what advice he should submit to the Queen, through the Home Secretary, as to the continuance of the Commission." Nothing of the kind, we fancy, has ever occurred before. It is officially stated that inconvenience has been occasioned at the India Office by the inability to settle financial questions which were specially referred to the Commission. Yet the Commission has ceased to hold any meetings or to take any evidence for nearly two years, and in the meantime its chairman, Lord Welby, has accepted what we must suppose are the onerous as well as the honourable duties of presiding over the London County Council. As an eminent member of the Civil Service, now *en disponibilité*, Lord Welby's assistance is naturally competed for in various directions. But the acceptance of the chairmanship of a Royal Commission involves, we should say, obligations which ought not to be set aside in favour of any other invitation except by an explicit act of renouncement. What have the members of Lord Welby's Commission been doing for the past two years? What do they propose to do in the future? What conclusions have they arrived at which justify them in suspending their enquiries without reporting to the Crown, and in permitting their chairman to engage in the meantime in more arduous and absorbing, though not more important, duties subject to a quite different mandate? It is in fact indisputable that since the appointment of the Royal Commission in 1895 no material advance has been

made towards the adoption of a report upon the matters referred to the Commission for investigation. It would be vain to deny that the Secretary of State is justified, after so long a period of suspense and patience, in deciding to intervene at last.

The *Morning Leader* (May 16) wrote:—

One of the slighter instruments of Toryism yesterday became the channel of a question about the delay of the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure. The Commission, which was appointed by Sir Henry Fowler and which has Lord Welby for its chairman, began to take evidence in 1894 and ceased to take evidence in 1897. Yet, if we except two appalling volumes of evidence, it has given the public no information, and has made no suggestions for the better administration of the finances of India or for the more equitable apportionment of common expenses between India and the United Kingdom. On the face of it, the delay of the Report is unusual. But so also is the amount of the evidence and the intricacy of the questions which it raises. People who have not read an appreciable fraction of the evidence, and whose real interest in the just management of Indian expenditure is nil, exhibit much concern over the absence of the Report. Perhaps some of them wish to have a dry wipe at Lord Welby, or at the County Council, of which he has become the chairman. Lord George Hamilton, whose ignorance about India would be unparalleled if it were not equalled by his indifference, said yesterday that Lord Welby's Commission had made no material advance towards the adoption of a Report. But, unless we are misinformed, a portion at least of a draft Report has been circulated and is in the hands of the Commissioners. Lord George Hamilton added that the delay was "a matter of much regret to the Government." Sunt lacrimae rerum—also crocodilorum. Things have their tears and crocodiles have theirs. It is to be hoped that Lord Welby and his colleagues will not allow themselves to be hustled into doing their work in a hasty and slipshod fashion. We do not know that the date of their Report greatly matters. What does matter is that it should be founded upon a close and impartial scrutiny of all the evidence and should, therefore, make the right sort of recommendations.

LORD ELGIN AT THE NORTHBROOK CLUB.

AFTER-DINNER HISTORY.

A dinner was given to the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine on Tuesday evening by the Northbrook Society at the Imperial Institute. The Earl of Northbrook was in the chair, and among those who were present were Viscount Cross, the Earl of Rosebery, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Harris, the Earl of Kimberley, Sir H. Fowler, M.P., Lord Wenlock, Lord Lawrence, Sir F. Abel, Colonel Lord William Beresford, V.C., Lord Loch, Sir R. Temple, Field-Marshal Sir D. Stewart, Sir E. Sassoon, M.P., General Sir George White, V.C., General Sir H. Norman, Sir William Muir, General Sir A. Clarke, Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, M.P., General Sir Owen Burne, General Sir T. Gordon, Sir H. Primrose, Professor Wyndham Dunstan, Sir F. Pollock, Mr. Birrell, M.P., Mr. G. E. Buckle, Sir Charles Lyall, Sir W. W. Hunter, Captain R. W. Morley, Mr. S. H. Romilly, Mr. H. M. Mody, Sir G. Birdwood, Sir Horace Walpole, Mr. Leigh Clare, M.P., Mr. R. Krishna, Mr. S. M. Cassim, Dr. S. A. Napadia (hon. sec.), Mr. H. T. Hartley, Sir T. Sutherland, M.P., Mr. C. Purdon Clarke, Sir James Peile, Mr. C. Byramji, Mr. G. Jethmal, Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff, Lieutenant Gerald Maltby, Mr. Aziz Khan, Mr. T. J. Desai, Mr. M. K. Prasada, Mr. Hakim Chand, Mr. A. N. Wollaston, Mr. E. Baillie, Sir Steuart Bayley, and General Sir John Gordon.

The Chairman said the society professed no politics, either English or Indian. Its humble office was to help native gentlemen who came here to come into contact with the best Englishmen. They were following the old custom of giving God speed to those who left and welcome back to those who returned. They had had the pleasure of having Lord Elgin to dine with them before he went out, and they were welcoming him on his return. He had received many letters of regret, from Lord Reay, Lord Hobhouse, Lord Roberts, Sir M. E. Grant Duff, Sir Lintorn Simmons, Sir George Adye, and others. He was glad to see present the Secretaries of State who were in office while Lord Elgin was Viceroy. Lord George Hamilton wished to be present, but was unable to attend in consequence of the death of his brother-in-law. He had hoped on this occasion to collect four ex-Viceroys, and had been so fortunate as to bring Lord Lansdowne to the dinner. But Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin had been unable to be present. Lord Dufferin wrote to express the greatest admiration of Lord Elgin, and said that since the days of Lord Canning India had been frequently visited with famine, but never had a famine of greater extent and intensity been endured than that which Lord Elgin had encountered with such firmness and patience. Their custom at these dinners was only to have two toasts, the first of which was the Queen and Empress of India, and the other the guest of the evening. He was, he was sure, not wrong in leaving to a distinguished fellow-countryman of Lord Elgin to propose his noble friend's health. He proposed "The Queen and Empress of India," which was received with wonted heartiness.

Lord Rosebery, who was received with cheers, said: My Lord Northbrook, my lords, and gentlemen, by your grace and favour I am called upon to propose the toast of the evening. By your favour also I was consulted as to the date of this banquet. You mentioned two or three dates which suited the late Viceroy of India, and asked me to indicate which would be the most appropriate. I had not the slightest hesitation in making that selection, because on consulting the almanack I found that this was the birthday—the fiftieth birthday—of Lord Elgin—(cheers)—and it seemed to me that he could spend it in no more appropriate fashion than by hearing expressed the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen for the past and their confident hopes for the future. (Cheers.) It is five years ago since we all bade God speed to Lord Elgin in this hall. As on this occasion you, Lord Northbrook, were in the chair, and, as now, I had the honour of proposing his health. I do not claim to be fit for many positions, but I do feel that there is a certain appropriateness in my proposing Lord Elgin's health on both these occasions. Perhaps he will forgive me for letting a little light of publicity into a chapter of which little is known. When he was first offered this great office—the greatest perhaps in many respects which it is in the power of the Crown to bestow—Lord Elgin, from the diffidence in his own powers which is his only drawback, and which I trust his residence in India has completely cured, thought it his duty to refuse. But I was authorised by Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, to use what arts I was capable of to induce Lord Elgin to think better of himself and to attempt this great task on behalf of his Queen and country. I do not think you, Lord Elgin, will easily forget the walk we had round Arthur's Seat—in itself a sufficiently inaccessible spot for a promenade, but which was rendered to me unfortunately more rocky and more toilsome by your rooted objections to believe that there was in you a potential great Viceroy of India. It is my boast that I succeeded in removing that objection—(cheers)—and if I were not afraid of the Lord Chief Justice's Bill affecting me in some form or other—(laughter)—I should be entitled to claim the customary commission of five per cent. on the reputation which you, my lord, won in India. (Laughter.) I can truly say that if I could be awarded it by any muse of history or by any means whatever I should be amply satisfied with that as the guerdon of public life. (Cheers.) It is five years ago, as I have said, since we last sat in this hall to drink the health of Lord Elgin. It was a critical moment for him then—it was a critical moment for some of us, who staked our reputation for political judgment on his career. And proud and confident as we felt of his appointment then, I do not deny that we feel prouder now in welcoming him back after his tale of work well told—after the armour is put off than when he was putting the armour on. (Cheers.) We sent him forward, we who knew him, with confident presages of a great reign in India. But we were not prepared for the incalculable difficulties which he had to surmount, or for the patience and ability and resource with which he surmounted them. (Cheers.) Plague and pestilence, war and famine were the events which visited India during Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty; and I doubt—if I may borrow an expression from Lord Dufferin's letter—whether since the Viceroyalty of Canning, when the Empire itself trembled in the balance, any Viceroy has had his term of office beset by such a series of visitations as those with which Lord Elgin had to deal. (Cheers.) It is not for me to-night, within a limited time and with a still more limited knowledge of detail, to recount how Lord Elgin dealt with all these problems. But this at least I may confidently say—and I have taken some pains to ascertain impartial opinions—that this young, unknown, untried Viceroy, coming to India with no flaming advertisements in his favour, with no great reputation even in the fields of Parliament, has left on India the stamp of a memory which is perhaps surpassed by none in that illustrious roll. (Cheers.) Apart from those special visitations with which Providence in His wisdom sees fit to afflict the teeming natives of India, there is another question as to which all Anglo-Indians are, I believe, permanently divided—as to which many who are not Anglo-Indians are in a state of perpetual perplexity. There is the great question of the frontier. Well, Lord Elgin, like all other Viceroys, has had his frontier difficulties, and I know he will not mind my avowing here that on one frontier question we have agreed frankly and honourably to differ. But the frontier question of India always seems to those who are not experts—and experts on every question are habitually distrusted—(laughter)—the frontier question in India always seems to lie, to the average Briton of common sense, in a somewhat narrow compass. The Almighty appears to have surrounded India with the most terrible of natural frontiers. An almost inaccessible chain of mountains inhabited by fierce and warlike tribes, not susceptible to intrigue, and resenting all interference from without, appears to the unaided eye of the Briton the ideal frontier for such an Empire as ours. It is, if I may compare it to anything else in nature, like a cactus hedge, absolutely impervious to those who wish to enter within it, absolutely impervious to those who wish to get out of it, but eminently undesirable if you wish to make it a seat to occupy. (Cheers.) And that, I confess, is the unaided view—subject of course to the limitations which are naturally opposed by the opinion of experts and by those who know much more of it than even experts—that I am inclined to take. But the chances of politics are always against Viceroys. They have always at intervals to sit on their cactus hedge, and the process, I believe—I speak hypothetically—is never agreeable to themselves. But there is one question with regard to that frontier which is as important as any that military scientists can lay down with regard to it. It is of no use your fortifying your frontier with all the inventions which science can furnish, with all the sedulous care which geographers can indicate unless behind it you give to the nations something worth defending. (Cheers.) That seems to me the problem before every Viceroy—the one of which here in Europe we hear most. We have the problem of the frontier and the wars that it involves. But above and beyond that is the question at least as interesting and far more important in my belief to the permanence of our Indian Empire—the happiness of the nations which you govern. (Cheers.) The Viceroy we are welcoming back was well aware of both requirements. He endeavoured by holding wisely and well the balance of power and of justice, to make the nations of India feel that they had something to lose in our rule, in our administration, in our civilisation. (Cheers.) It is when a Viceroy has made that realised in our Indian Empire that he may put off his armour as Lord Elgin has laid it off this year. (Cheers.) I have said that to-day we celebrate Lord Elgin's birthday as well as his return. (Cheers.) That leads me into a train of thought away from India. I am thinking, not so much of his past, splendid as it is, as of his future, illustrious as I hope it will be. The Viceroyalty is, I trust, not the end, but the beginning of a career. (Cheers.) I admit that if he wished to hold high office in the State, the omens are not particularly favourable for him. (Laughter.) He left his party

in power, or at any rate in office. (Laughter.) He finds it on his return in a position of great numerical weakness in Parliament and disheartened apparently by a superfluity of retired leaders. (Loud laughter.) But I trust that will not discourage him. Let him, if he will take my humble advice, not attempt to occupy the position of a retired leader. (Laughter.) Let him—I speak not in jest—take a higher example—not merely the precept, but the practice of Lord Herschell, who, so much associated with the hall in which we meet, was not merely the illustrious servant in office, but the illustrious servant out of office, of his Queen and country. I look forward to a great career of usefulness for this man, who, comparatively so young, has already accomplished so much, has left the seal of his name on our Indian Empire by an administration which will not easily be forgotten. (Cheers.) So gentlemen I ask you to drink the health of Lord Elgin. I ask you not merely to drink his health, but to wish him many happy returns of this day, bringing on each occasion new opportunities of utility to his country. I ask you to drink it, not merely with memories of the past, but with hope for the future; with a feeling that what has been done is only an earnest of what is to be; and with that cordial expression of your enthusiasm I ask you to pledge a bumper to the health of Victor Alexander, Earl of Elgin, second Viceroy of that name. (Loud cheers.)

Lord Elgin, who was warmly received, in response to the toast, observed that he could never forget that the Northbrook Society in 1893 took him, so to speak, on trust, and sent him out to India with the encouragement of their good wishes. He could not but be proud of the way in which they had received him that evening, and it was a great satisfaction to him to have that opportunity of thanking them for all their kindness. (Cheers.) The scene before him recalled very vividly the proceedings of 1893—not the least by the fact that his noble friend on that and on the present occasion proposed the toast to which he had to respond. He acknowledged that had it not been for Lord Rosebery he should not have been the Guest of the Society in 1893, or in 1899; and, if it were indeed true that he had attained any success in the conduct of affairs in India, then, indeed, he owed to his noble friend a very great debt. (Cheers.) Kind friends often said that he had gone through a period of great anxiety, and he was not prepared to deny that he had met with some exceptional circumstances. But he could not imagine a Viceroy free from anxieties, and anxieties which did not always—or, indeed, most often—arise from exceptional circumstances, but even from the most ordinary conditions of life. To take the most active of all commonplaces, the weather. In this country we complained most often of the vicissitudes of the weather, but in India times and seasons were more regular, and out of that regularity there sprang a great anxiety. Probably he had felt this more keenly since the summer of 1896. But the progress of the monsoon was an anxiety which was prolonged, because it must extend at least over the period of the rains, and it was always coupled with the consciousness that a very slight departure from regularity might bring with it a tremendous calamity. But he would not speak of panics that evening; it did not seem to him a fit subject for an after-dinner speech. (Laughter.) The essential condition in Indian administration was that it should be ever more and more ready, and he had no doubt that the Viceroy who had to deal with the next famine would profit by the experience of the past famine, which had been duly recorded for his benefit. (Cheers.) If however, the forces of nature conspired against a Viceroy's equanimity, so, he took it, did the disposition of man. He supposed that no one ever went to India more desirous of promoting peace than he did, and if it were true that in his records were included more warlike operations than most, if not any, of his predecessors he hoped that it would not be imputed to any recklessness and uncontrollable military ambition on his part. (Laughter.) He did not like quoting himself, but he was perfectly willing to be pinned to his old professions, and he desired to give a few words from the first utterance he made on this subject at a Lahore durbar in 1894. He then said: "It is our aim and ambition so to regulate our relations with the brave undisciplined inhabitants of the hills on our western border as, at the same time, to ensure the peace and security for life and property upon which our treaty obligations and the dictates of humanity compel us to insist, and to leave to them the entire occupation of their country, the fullest measure of autonomy, and the most complete liberty in their internal affairs to follow their tribal customs." (Cheers.) He claimed from first to last that he had set his face against anything that savoured of aggression or even of retaliation. A mere retaliatory expedition he detested; and it was a satisfaction to him to know that his desire to minimise so far as he could warfare of this kind was shared by his distinguished friend who did the greater part of the fighting—Sir William Lockhart. While during the five years they were masters of by far the larger proportion of the country lying between the borders of British India and the territories of the Amir of Afghanistan they added nothing to the dominions of her Majesty. (Hear, hear.) Elsewhere they had acquired by agreement or by purchase—and they paid heavily for it—land which was required for those posts which general political necessities had compelled them to establish. There were, however, some matters which the Government could not refuse to undertake. It could not refuse to act up to its tribal obligations; it could not refuse to bring succour to its servants who were in peril of their lives; and it could not refuse to repel unprovoked attacks on its posts and garrisons. (Hear, hear.) It could not be said for certain that frontier wars might not occur again; but at the same time he did not regard the situation as hopeless. On the contrary, he rather thought that his opinion would by some be considered as too sanguine, for it had always seemed to him that if time were given it might be sufficient to seek for no more heroic measure as a remedy than patience. The tribes knew now that they could not offend with impunity—that we could follow them and reach them even in their remotest parts. If we were firm and strong, not allowing ourselves to be trifled with, and at the same time imperturbably conciliatory, never interfering with Native customs unless they were against the dictates of humanity, we might hope that in time closer relations with our neighbours in the hills would be brought about. (Cheers.) Human nature could not resist the temptation of making money; and there were fertile valleys below these hills. If the process were long and costly, and if the spirit of disorder should crop up now and again and impede our progress, did we not owe something to these neighbours of ours? We expended men and money in opening out the interior of Africa to trade and civilising influences; and why should we shut the door against these poor mountaineers—against the North-Western frontiers of India. (Hear, hear.) He could not help thinking that if we persisted the time would come when the cactus hedge of which his noble friend had spoken might not be quite so prickly to sit down upon—(laughter)—and that we might live in more peaceable relations than we had done hitherto with our neighbours in that locality. He had formed a very distinct opinion that there was less uneasiness and more settled feeling in India when he left than when he arrived there. (Cheers.) That was the conclusion to which he came after having taken considerable pains to inform himself regarding the state of the country at a time when it was all important to know all that they could about it. If he might give one reason which had contributed to bring about this improvement—if improvement there were—he would say that it might be due to the gratitude which had been felt in India for the munificent aid given to that Empire by this country in the time of famine. (Hear, hear.) He feared that he had gone far to exhaust them already, and yet he was well aware that he had only touched on the fringe of subjects. He could not forget the goodwill of the many Europeans and Natives whose friendship he had acquired and hoped to retain—(cheers)—and he could not forget the official goodwill of many able and loyal colleagues, and of the Secretaries of State of both political parties, who had given him unswerving support. He thanked the members and friends of that society, which bore such an honoured name, and who had assembled under the presidency of one whom he might perhaps term, in the current phrase of the day, "The Father of Viceroys"—(cheers)—and he must especially thank his noble friends who had expressed their sentiments in such eloquent terms, and who had even gone into such domestic details as to bring to their notice the fact that that was his 50th birthday. (Cheers.) He could assure them that the dinner which he had been given on that occasion would remain as a bright spot in his memory for a long time to come. (Cheers.)

Lord Kimberley proposed the health of the chairman, to whom a great debt of gratitude was due for having organised these occasions of paying honours to outgoing and returning Viceroys. He had not heard the word "currency," but that word must at one time have had a boding sound for their guest. Having for a considerable time held the office of Secretary of State for India, he could testify to the hearty co-operation which had existed between himself and Lord Ripon and Lord Lansdowne, although one of those noble lords was opposed to him in politics. The truth was—fortunately—that as regarded India our statesmen were not really party men. (Cheers.)

Lord Northbrook briefly replied.

SOME OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The "Times."

A distinguished and brilliant company met last night under the auspices of the Northbrook Club to welcome Lord Elgin on his return from India, where for five years he has discharged with acknowledged ability and success the arduous duties of a splendid position. A Viceroy of India lives in the fierce light that beats about a throne, and during his tenure of office has to pass the ordeal of unstinted criticism tempered with but little of the praise which less eminent public servants at home are secure of receiving from at least one section of their countrymen. It is all the more gracious and the more just that on his return he should receive assurance of the esteem and gratitude of the nation won by services which can at last be judged in the mass. Lord Elgin as was pointed out by more than one speaker last night, has had to contend with peculiar difficulties. To famine upon an unusually extended scale has been added an outbreak of plague raising administrative questions of the greatest difficulty, and, as if these were not enough, several frontier wars, one being of uncommon magnitude, have tested the capacity of the Indian Government. From something comparable to one of these calamities few terms of Viceregal office are entirely free, but it is happily seldom that so formidable a combination falls to the lot of a Viceroy. In the opinion of those conversant with the normal cares of Indian administration and competent to measure the enormous complications brought about by famine, pestilence, and war, Lord Elgin has dealt ably and successfully with his accumulated difficulties. He may be sure that the cultivated opinion of his countrymen will accept and endorse the verdict, and may confidently assume that the warm reception given to him last night fairly represents the estimate of his services formed by the public at large. The facile wisdom which follows the event, yet is never wise enough to measure the complexity of the causes on which it depends, can no doubt point here and there to what it regards as mistakes. But common sense and common generosity, looking back upon five years of effort, take a broader view. Without undue boasting we may safely affirm that no other nation in the world could or would have handled the famine and the plague as they have been handled by the Government of India, and though we do not pretend to emulate the great military powers of Europe in magnitude of warlike preparation, it may be doubted whether any among them could have fought the Tirah campaign with so small an expenditure of men and money. In all these great matters Lord Elgin, as head of the Indian Government and representative of the Queen, carried a heavy weight of responsibility, and must in equity receive his due meed of praise for their successful treatment.—(May 17.)

The "Daily News."

Lord Rosebery's eloquent speech at the Elgin banquet last night contained an excellent figure. Referring to the natural frontiers of India he likened them to a cactus hedge—"impervious to those who wish to enter, impervious to those who wish to get out, but eminently

undesirable if you wish to make it a seat to occupy." The figure will appeal immediately to all whose travels in the East have made them acquainted with the cactus in any of its natural haunts. It would be impossible to put the case against the "forward" frontier policy in a simpler or more effective way. Lord Rosebery's "cactus hedge" is likely to pass current for a long time among the happy phrases of political controversy. The hero of the evening, Lord Elgin himself, well deserved the compliments that were paid to him. Many Liberals have had differences of opinion with him on Indian questions, and have regretted that he did not sometimes take a more independent stand. But there can be no difference of opinion about the admirable spirit in which Lord Elgin addressed himself to grappling with a series of disasters and difficulties such as few Viceroys in recent times have had to encounter. His administrative ability has been remarkable, and he has set a high example of public spirit and of undaunted patriotism. Not the least admirable feature of his Viceroyalty was the entire absence of fuss and show which characterised it. Lord Elgin is an utter stranger to the modern arts of advertisement. Lord Rosebery had some interesting things to say about the ex-Viceroy's diffidence at the time when he reluctantly assumed the duties of that responsible office. He had indeed no great political training or experience. One may almost invert the famous epigram, and say that few would have thought Lord Elgin capable of rule—unless he had ruled. The honourable and successful Viceroyalty of the young, untried, and retiring man, whom Mr. Gladstone selected for the greatest but one of all offices under the Crown, is a remarkable illustration of the "reserve strength" of the British race.—(May 17.)

THE "MORNING LEADER."

Nobody, we imagine, will be disposed to grudge Lord Elgin the compliment which was paid to him last night by the Northbrook Society, but returned Viceroys may well consider how far it is an unmixed advantage for them to be feasted and praised in this fashion. The effusive compliments of after-dinner oratory are well enough in their way. But when they have to do with so extremely important a matter as the administration of India during a period of five years they cannot be passed over without notice if they are inaccurate. Lord Elgin undoubtedly had a difficult task as Viceroy of India. He had to deal successively with war, famine, and pestilence—a task which might easily have proved too much for a stronger man. It is known that before Mr. Gladstone made Lord Elgin Viceroy the post was offered to Sir Henry Norman and to Lord Herschell. It is interesting to speculate as to the mode in which either would have acquitted himself. Sir Henry Norman, who was one of the ablest and staunchest opponents of the "forward" frontier policy, would probably have avoided the war beyond the North-West frontier. But whether he had avoided it or not, he certainly would not have allowed himself to be led or driven by the military clique at Simla and an incapable Secretary of State at home into the occupation of Chitral. Nor, we are very sure, would Lord Herschell have permitted the troubles which followed the famine and the plague to produce a new law of sedition dictated by panic. Nobody impugns either the excellence of Lord Elgin's intentions or the amiability of his disposition. But these things did not save him from becoming the yielding instrument of stronger but irresponsible men. The result is that the period of his Viceroyalty will be remembered as one not only of much unavoidable calamity but also of cardinal failures of policy. His characteristic policy was the policy of the "mandate"—or, in plain English, of doing what Lord George Hamilton told him to do. There were some who hoped that Lord Curzon would take a bolder line, and occasionally dare to think for himself. But, as recent events have shown, he has made himself the tool even of Mr. Chamberlain.—(May 17.)

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, May 11.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (Estimate)—Copy presented—of Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for 1898-9, compared with the results of 1897-8 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 191.]

East India (Finance and Revenue Accounts)—Copy presented—of Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India for 1897-8 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

East India (Home Accounts)—Copy presented—of Home Accounts of the Government of India [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 192.]

Monday, May 15.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. A. S. RUSSELL'S PETITION.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had received a petition from Mr. A. S. Russell, of the Indian P. W. Department, dated May, 1898:

Whether this correctly represented the position of the officers sent out to India from the Cooper's Hill Engineering College during the first three or four years:

And, whether he proposed to take any steps to remedy the grievances from which this officer and his contemporaries appeared to suffer from want of promotion, and which was not considered by the Select Committee of the House in 1890.

Lord. G. HAMILTON: Memorials have been received from Mr. A. S. Russell and other officers of the Indian Public Works Department who were recruited from the Royal Indian Engineering College in the years 1874-76.

The contents of these memorials are now engaging my attention, but I can say nothing as to the decision which may be arrived at.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE. THE DELAY OF THE REPORT.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, if he could state to the House why the Royal Commissioners on Indian Expenditure, appointed in 1895, had not made their Report:

And, whether it was to be hoped that the Commissioners would make their Report without further delay.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to answer the question. I have already explained in replies to various questions that I have no power over the proceedings of this Commission; but the present condition of things can be best explained by the letter which I have had addressed to the secretary of the Commission, which I will read:—

"India Office, Whitehall, S.W., May 15, 1899.

"Sir,—I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to call your attention to the fact that the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into Indian expenditure held its last meeting upon July 27, 1897, after which day it adjourned.

"A period of nearly two years has therefore elapsed, during which no meetings have been held, nor, so far as the Secretary of State can ascertain, has any material advance been made towards the adoption of a report upon the matters referred to the Commission for investigation.

"This delay is a matter of much regret to her Majesty's Government.

"Lord George Hamilton therefore requests that you should communicate this letter to every member of the Commission in order that they may inform him whether, and, if so, when they propose by the submission of a report to her Majesty to discharge the functions entrusted to them; and on receipt of their replies he will consider what advice he should submit to the Queen through the Home Secretary as to the continuance of the Commission.

"Considerable inconvenience has already been caused to this department, from its inability to settle various outstanding financial questions which were specially referred to the Commission for their opinion.

"I remain yours truly."

Sir M. BHOWNAGGREE: Has any answer been received?

Lord G. HAMILTON: No; the letter has only just been sent.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Who was chairman of this Commission?

Lord G. HAMILTON: I think my hon. friend can ascertain.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I am trying to.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The chairman was Lord Welby.

Tuesday, May 16.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RAILWAY GAUGES IN INDIA.

Sir JAMES KITSON asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been drawn to the continued extension of the metre and other smaller gauges of railways in India in competition with the legitimate spheres of the standard gauge:

And whether he would take steps towards defining the scope of the smaller gauges.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am quite aware of the importance of defining the limits within which the metre gauge and other smaller gauges should be used. They are sanctioned, not in competition with the standard gauge, but either for feeder-lines, as an improvement on ordinary roads, or for railway systems in districts, such as Burma, where broad-gauge lines would be impracticable on account of their comparatively high cost.

TROUBLES IN BANGANAPALEE.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to the troubles which recently arose in the small Native State of Banganapalee, in the Madras Presidency, and to what was alleged to have been the harsh treatment by the Nawab of that State of a number of his subjects:

And whether he would look into the matter and consider whether some official enquiry into the facts should be directed.

Lord G. HAMILTON: My attention has been called to the proceedings referred to in this question, and I have been in communication with the Government of Madras on the subject. I learn from them that the Political Agent at Banganapalee was specially instructed to watch the trial of rioters which took place after the recent disturbances, and that measures were taken to prevent any miscarriage of justice. I also learn that the Nawab has been constantly reminded by the Government of Madras of his obligations, and that they are endeavouring to induce him to improve his administration. The right hon. gentleman may rely on it that I shall continue to give my attention to the matter, and shall take any measures which may appear to me after full consideration to be advisable.

THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that a new College of Law, with a suitable staff of professors, under the presidency of the Hon. Mr. Justice Tyabji, was established at Bombay in 1897 by private enterprise, and that in January, 1898, the college was affiliated to the Bombay University:

Whether he would state for what reasons the Bombay Government refused its sanction to such affiliation when applied to by the University authorities:

Whether he was aware that since the founding of the University in 1857 such sanction had in no other case been refused:

And, whether he would explain how this refusal was in accordance with the declaration of her Majesty's Government in 1884, upon the report of the Education Commission, that in higher education

private effort should be increasingly and mainly relied on and systematically encouraged.

Lord G. Hamilton: I h[illegible] as to the character of the private institution refe[illegible] this question, or of its staff of professors. But I understand that the Government of Bombay, who have quite recently taken steps to improve the Government School of Law and to make it equal to all demands, considered that it was not advisable that the control of the higher legal education should be wholly or partially in private hands. They, therefore, with the full concurrence of the Government of India, refused the affiliation which had been applied for.

As regards the question of precedents, it is obvious that every application of this kind must be dealt with on its own merits. I see no reason to doubt the soundness of the decision arrived at in this case; nor does it appear to me to be inconsistent with the views of the Education Commissioners who considered that the establishment of competing schools in one locality might involve "a clashing of interests and a waste of power."

Sir W. Wedderburn: May I ask if the noble lord is aware that the Government contribute nothing to the support of the schools, but on the contrary make a profit of 8,000 rupees a year out of the fees? Does he think it desirable that a monopoly should be created in that way?

The Speaker: Order, order! The hon. member is now arguing the question.

SALARIES AND DUTIES AT COOPER'S HILL.

Mr. Maclean asked the Secretary of State for India whether the existing President of the Engineering College at Cooper's Hill accepted his appointed three years ago on the express condition that he should also discharge the duties of a professor of that institution;

Whether he was aware that this condition, thus first introduced, caused other eligible candidates to withdraw on the ground that both functions could not be efficiently discharged by the same individual;

And whether, as the Secretary of State had now reverted to the former system and invited applications for the post of Professor, it was intended to reduce proportionately the President's emoluments now that he would be relieved of the professor's work.

Lord G. Hamilton: It is true that the existing President of Cooper's Hill College was appointed on condition that he should act not only as President, but also as Professor of Constructive Engineering. Whether this condition deterred other candidates from applying I am unable to say. The combination of duties had not been tried previously to Colonel Pennycuick's appointment, and after about two years' experience he represented to me that the arrangement was one which could not be satisfactorily worked. After very careful consideration of the matter in Council I decided to relieve Colonel Pennycuick of his professional duties without reducing his salary, which was the same that had been drawn by his predecessors, who took no part in the teaching of the College.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE SUGAR QUESTION.

THE DESPATCH OF MAY 5, 1898.

Sir Henry Fowler asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Despatch from the Government of India, No. 129, dated 5th May, 1898, was signed by all the Members of the Viceroy's Council.

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes, Sir; the despatch was signed by the Viceroy and by all the Members of his Council.

Mr. J. M. Maclean: Are these Members of the Viceroy's Council the same who agreed with the Viceroy in reversing his predecessor's decision?

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes, I believe they are. As the hon. member is aware, when people get more accurate information on a subject they sometimes change their opinions. (Laughter and hear, hear.)

[With reference to Sir Henry Fowler's question it may be noted that it was in the despatch of May 5, 1898—printed on page 3 of the recent Blue-book—that Lord Elgin wrote, "We are not prepared to levy countervailing duties on sugar imported into India."—Ed. India.]

Thursday, May 18.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he would state when the Financial Statement, with the proceedings thereon in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, would be placed in the hands of members.

Lord G. Hamilton: In order to save the expense of reprinting, it was arranged last year that copies of the Financial Statement with the Proceedings in the Legislative Council thereon, should be despatched from India for the use of members of the House. I have ascertained that the requisite supply is on its way to England, and may be expected to be in the hands of members by about the end of the Whitsuntide recess.

THE COST OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he would state what number of the 258,010, appearing on the Estimates for 1899-1900 as forming the regular army, were at the present time stationed in India, and were paid for out of the India Revenue:

And, what was the total amount charged to India on account of the troops referred to.

Lord G. Hamilton: Of the 258,010 men appearing on the Estimates for 1899-1900 as forming the regular army 73,157 are on the Indian Establishment, and the whole of their pay, food, clothing, and other charges, including transport to and from India, is defrayed from Indian revenues.

The Estimates do not admit of an accurate separation of the charges under all heads for the European and the Native forces, but in a return given to Parliament a few years ago (No. 20 of 1894) Rs. 891 was given as the average annual cost of a British soldier in India. Taking this rate, the cost of these men would be about 650 lakhs of rupees, or (at 1s. 4d. the rupee) £4,333,000. Perhaps the rate may now be somewhat higher.

This is exclusive of a payment of £548,700 (or £7 10s. per head) to the War Office for depôt and recruiting charges in this country, and of the cost of deferred pay and pensions.

IMPORTS OF SUGAR INTO INDIA.

Captain Sinclair asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was yet in a position to give the House the figures for the imports of Sugar into India for the twelve months ending March, 1899, specifying the different countries of origin.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have as yet received from India no trade statistics later than those for February, 1899; but I expect to receive the final volume for the financial year in the course of a week or a fortnight.

BOMBAY INSOLVENCY COURT.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India if he could state what was the total cost of the establishment maintained by the Clerk of the Insolvency Court at Bombay out of his fees;

And if, as stated by the Secretary of State for India, the Clerk paid the cost of the establishment out of his fees, he could explain why Rs. 4,438 per annum was shown in the Civil Estimates, 1897-8, Vol. II, Bombay, page 78, as paid by the Government for the establishment of the Clerk of the Insolvency Court.

Lord G. Hamilton: The total cost of the establishment maintained by the Clerk of the Insolvency Court at Bombay out of his fees was stated in 1895 at Rs. 2,194 per annum. This is in addition to the sum of Rs. 4,374 (in 1895) contributed by Government. I did not state in my previous answer that the Clerk paid the cost of the whole establishment out of his fees. What I said was that out of the fees he receives "he meets certain charges for establishment."

BOMBAY OFFICIAL ASSIGNEE.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that the official assignee in Bombay was paid by commissions and fees averaging about Rs. 3,000 per mensem, and the cost of his establishment about Rs. 3,200 per annum was paid by Government;

And whether, considering that the Finance Committee of 1886 recommended, with the concurrence of the Chief Justice, that the salary of the official assignee should be Rs. 1,000 per mensem, and that the commissions and fees should be credited to Government, he was now prepared to give effect to that recommendation.

Lord G. Hamilton: I believe it is true that for the three years ending in January, 1894, the average receipts of the official assignee were about Rs. 3,000 per mensem, but this was owing to exceptional circumstances. In the year 1895-6 the average receipts were only Rs. 1,125 per mensem. I cannot at such short notice give in detail the reasons why the recommendations of the Finance Committee have not been acted upon, but I think it probable that the matter has been held over pending the passing into law of the Insolvency Bill which has only recently been abandoned; on this as on the other similar matter about which the hon. baronet questioned me on the 11th instant I will communicate with the Government of Bombay.

THE GARRISON OF CHITRAL.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether it had been decided to reduce the garrison at Chitral;

Whether he would consider the advisability of withdrawing this garrison altogether from Chitral and Gilgit;

And if he could state what saving would be effected by such withdrawal.

Lord G. Hamilton: My answer to the first clause of this question is in the affirmative. As to the possibility of withdrawing the garrison altogether, I can only say that no proposal of that kind is before me, nor can I give any undertaking of the kind which the hon. baronet desires. I am not able, without a reference to India, to state accurately what saving would be effected by such withdrawal.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

SIR H. FOWLER'S MOTION FOR DISALLOWANCE.

Sir Henry Fowler has given notice of motion in the following terms: Indian Tariffs Act, 1899,—That an humble Address be presented to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be pleased to disallow The Indian Tariffs Act, 1899. [*An early day*.]

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

On May 28 Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will address the "Westbourne Park Sunday Afternoon Conference" at Westbourne Park Chapel, on "The Political and Economic Condition of India." Mr. J. Wallis Chapman will take the chair at 3 p.m.

On May 1 a public meeting was held at Carlton, when a lantern lecture on "India and its People" was given by a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee. The room was crowded with an attentive and appreciative audience.

On May 3 a limelight lecture on "India" was given by Miss Alison Garland, at Benson. Mr. W. Littleboy, J.P., presided over a good attendance. A vote of thanks to the lecturer was moved by the Rev. J. Williams and seconded by Mr. Cooper, and a unanimous invitation was given to the lecturer to deliver another address on "The Forward Policy in India."

On May 4 Miss Garland speaking on "Current Politics" at Stokenchurch referred to the government of India, and described the condition of the country and the urgent need of the reforms advocated by the Indian National Congress.

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Printed by A. BONNER, 1 & 2, Took's Court, London, E.C., and Published for the Proprietors at 84 & 85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.